



2011 City of Minneapolis Bicycling Account

A year-end update on the state
of bicycling in Minneapolis





1st


advisory
bike lane
in North
America

+600

the number of
new durable bike
symbols put on
streets in 2011

↑47%

increase in
bicyclists
counted annually
from 2007-2011



Bicyclists ride on the Midtown Greenway through south Minneapolis.

1st

bicycle signal
in Minnesota
installed in
2011

+4

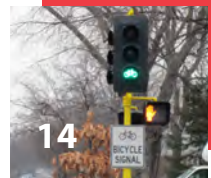
the number
of bicycle
boulevards
added in 2011

↑75%

increase in the
miles of on-street
bikeways from
2010-2011

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This report was compiled by the Traffic & Parking Services Division within the Minneapolis Public Works Department. For questions about this report please call Minneapolis 311 at 612-673-3000.

All images by Minneapolis Public Works, Peter and Emmet Kowler (p. 5 & 22), Phillip O'Toole (p. 24), and Cycle Twin Cities and Luke Franci (back cover).

Cover Photo: Open Streets Minneapolis, June 2011

Back Cover: Mosaic at Bryant Avenue South and West 32nd Street, lead artist Shirra Frank, coordinated by Mary Ann Schoenberger with funding and support from the Calhoun Area Residents Action Group and the City of Minneapolis.

General information about bicycling in Minneapolis can found online at www.minneapolismn.gov/bicycles.

January 17, 2012

from the mayor

Minneapolis is on the right path



I'm proud to introduce this first edition of the Minneapolis Bicycle Account, and I anticipate that we will see this report as a regular register of our collective bicycling accomplishments throughout the city.

Minneapolis has been recognized many times over as one of North America's great bicycle cities. Every day, thousands of residents, commuters and visitors take to the streets, pedaling their way to work, to school, to visit friends and family, to socialize and to do business around town. In the process, they improve their own health and well-being, decrease roadway congestion, reduce their contribution to air pollution and greenhouse gases, and keep more money in their pockets to spend at great Minneapolis businesses. We strive to make it a daily reality that all bicyclists enjoy a welcoming environment and are able to ride safely, efficiently, and conveniently within the City of Minneapolis year-round.

I'm proud of what we've accomplished, but we know we have a long road ahead of us. In Minneapolis, about four percent of work commute trips are on bicycles. Compared to Portland, Oregon (six percent) and celebrated bicycle cities such as Amsterdam (38 percent), Copenhagen (36 percent) and Münster (40 percent), we've got our work cut out for us. But remember that many of these cities started planning for their bicycle systems several decades ago. Minneapolis is on the right path, and this account will be an important benchmark of our progress toward our goals.

The following are some key accomplishments from 2011.

- We added 35 miles of bikeways on streets. We now have about 167 miles of bikeways in the city – only 11 miles short of our goal of 178 miles by 2015. Minneapolis will meet that goal and surpass it by 2012.
- The City adopted its first comprehensive Bicycle Master Plan in July. This document – several years in development – sets an ambitious 30-year vision to improve bicycling in the city.
- Minneapolis built its first bicycle boulevards in 2011. The bike boulevard network will encourage people to use bicycles who might not otherwise be near trails or don't want to ride on busier streets.
- Minneapolis hired its first full-time bicycle and pedestrian coordinator in December. Shaun Murphy will lead the effort to implement the new bike plan and coordinate among the various departments and Public Works divisions that make our bicycle system operate.

Minneapolis is going to keep at it, and we can all look forward to the benefits as we become a truly welcoming and world-class bicycle city.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. Rybak'.

Mayor R.T. Rybak

bicycle traffic

Bicyclist counts and commuting



⤴ Since 2007, bicycling is up 47 percent in Minneapolis.

Bicycling is Up

Each year, the Minneapolis Public Works Department conducts bicyclist counts at 30 citywide locations. From 2010 to 2011 the number of bicyclists increased 25 percent, and from 2007 to 2011 the number of bicyclists increased 47 percent. Minneapolis is on track to meet its sustainability goal of increasing bicycling 60 percent from 2007 to 2014.



Commuting Remains High

Commuting data for all modes is collected by the U.S. Census Bureau through the American Community Survey (ACS). After a significant increase from 2007-2008, there was a small decrease in bicycle commuting in 2009 and again in 2010. Currently, about 3.7 percent of Minneapolis residents regularly commute by bicycle. Among these, 37 percent are women, compared to 26 percent nationwide.

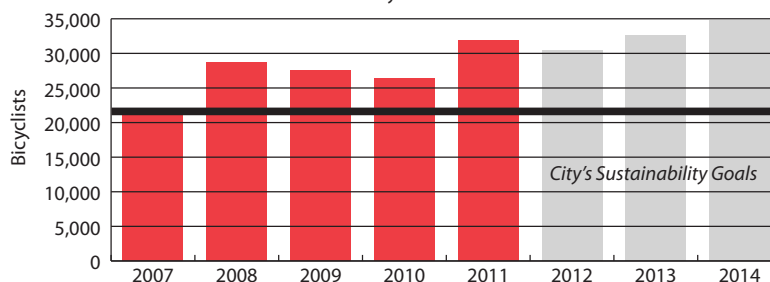
The Metropolitan Council periodically collects data on the modes people choose for their trips. Data from 2000 indicates that 4.5 percent of all trips in Minneapolis are taken by bicycle. New data will be released in 2012.

⤵ 37 percent of Minneapolis bicycle commuters are women.

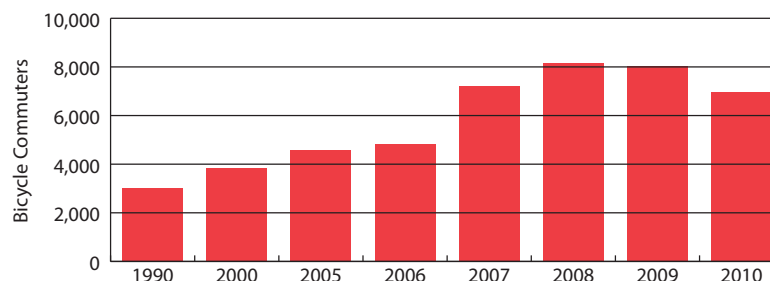
Minneapolis is on track to meet its goal of increasing bicycling 60 percent by 2014. ⤵

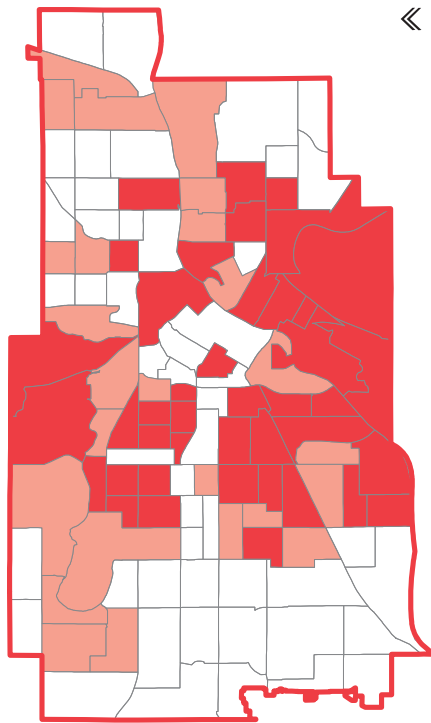
Since 1990, bicycle commuting has increased significantly for Minneapolis residents. ⤵

Annual Bicyclist Count Totals

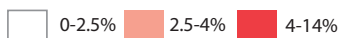


Regular Bicycle Commuters (Minneapolis Residents)





Bicycle Commuters by Census Tract



« Bicycle Commuters

Bicycle commuting is high in most areas of the city, but it is highest for residents of neighborhoods surrounding downtown, by the University of Minnesota and in south and northeast Minneapolis.

This tract-level commuting data represents ACS five-year estimates from 2006 to 2010. Surveying is conducted year round and reflects an individual's primary commuting mode during a specified week. The sample size for this ACS five-year estimate was approximately 25,000 Minneapolis residents and was collected between 2006 to 2010.

Bicyclists ride north on the Hiawatha LRT Trail. The trail is a popular commuting corridor from south Minneapolis into downtown.



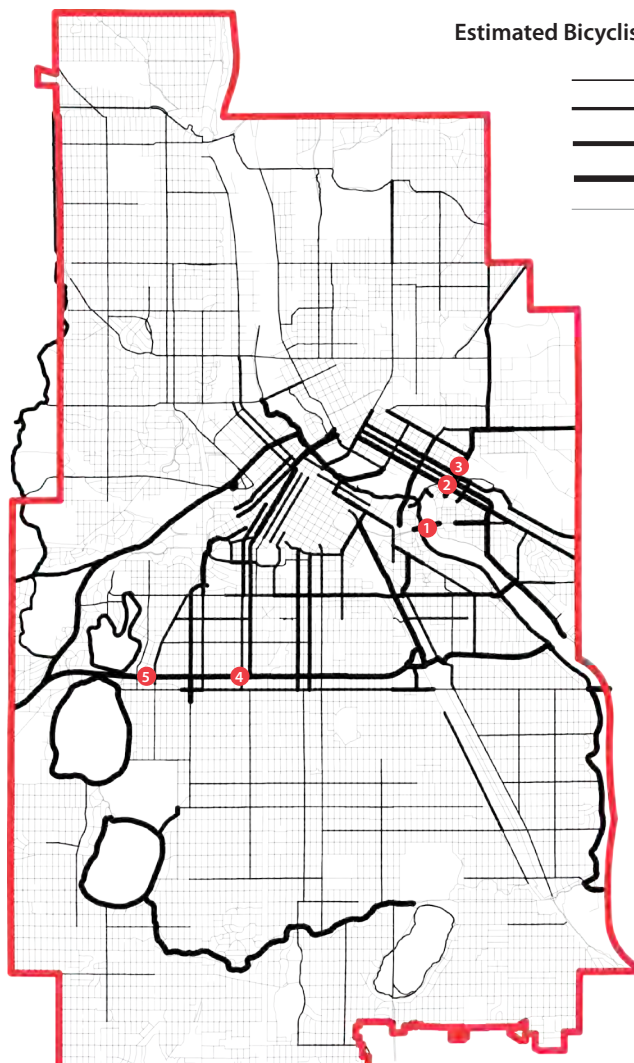
Bicyclist Traffic Data »

Each year, Minneapolis Public Works partners with Transit for Livable Communities and more than 100 volunteers to count bicycling and walking activity at locations around the city. To date, more than 400 locations have been counted.

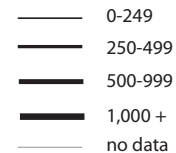
Bicyclist traffic is generally highest on off-street paths like the Midtown Greenway and around the Chain of Lakes. On-street traffic is highest on streets in downtown and by the University of Minnesota.

Top bicycling locations:

1. Washington Avenue Southeast Bridge over Mississippi River (6,850/day)
2. 15th Avenue Southeast north of Southeast University Avenue (3,810/day)
3. 15th Avenue Southeast north of Southeast 5th Street (3,570/day)
4. Midtown Greenway west of Blaisdell Avenue (3,490/day)
5. Midtown Greenway west of Hennepin Avenue (3,470/day)



Estimated Bicyclists per Day



bicyclist safety

Creating safer streets for all



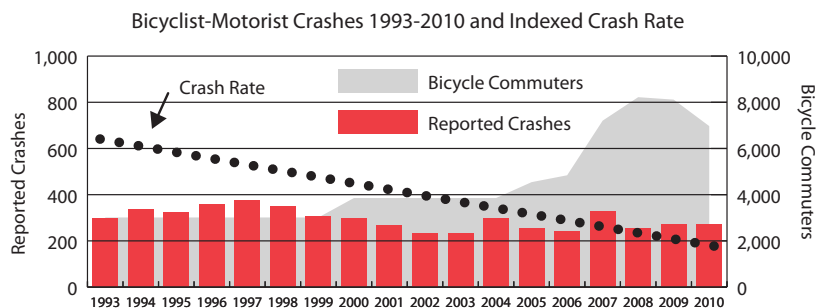
Safety in Numbers

As bicyclist traffic in Minneapolis increases, the bicyclist-motorist crash rate has decreased significantly. Over the past 18 years, the bicyclist-motorist crash rate decreased from 10 percent to 4 percent. In 1993, there were 298 bicyclist-motorist crashes and about 3,000 regular bicycle commuters. In 2010, there were 273 crashes and nearly 7,000 bicycle commuters.

This decrease can be explained by the “safety in numbers” theory in which more bicyclists riding on streets increases their visibility. Drivers come to expect bicyclists on streets and in turn drive more cautiously. Also, with more individuals trying out a bicycle for at least some trips, more people can relate to bicycling in traffic and are therefore more courteous when behind the wheel.

⌘ *More bicyclists in Minneapolis have created a “safety in numbers” effect.*

As bicycling increases, the number of bicyclist-motorist crashes has remained flat. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the annual crash rate.



Behind the Big Wheels

During the 2011 Fall Bike Walk Week, the Public Works Department partnered with the City's Bicycle Advisory Committee, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota, Minneapolis Public Schools, Metro Transit and the Minnesota Trucking Association to hold the first-ever Behind the Big Wheels safety event.

The event was an opportunity for bicyclists and pedestrians to get behind the wheel of a full-sized semi truck, a Metro Transit bus and a school bus to better understand the visibility and blind spot difficulties that large vehicles frequently have. Public Works also created an educational brochure for drivers and bicyclists on this issue and created a presentation for drivers of commercial vehicles.

This event was created in response to several fatal bicycle crashes in recent years involving large commercial vehicles making turns. The Bicycle Advisory Committee is interested in making Behind the Big Wheels a regular event and moving it around the city for more residents to see.

⌘ *The public got a chance to sit behind the wheel of a semi truck, Metro Transit bus and school bus to better understand visibility and blind spot difficulties between bicyclists and large vehicles.*

Safety Improvement:

Green Bike Lanes on 15th Avenue Southeast

15th Avenue Southeast is the busiest street for bicycling in Minneapolis with more than 3,800 bicycle trips made each day. University students use the street to get between school and home. When tragedy struck and a student was killed by a turning semi truck this spring, the community came together with a solution. Green bike lanes were added through three intersections to make the lanes more noticeable to turning vehicles. The new markings are intended to give drivers a visual indication that through bicyclists have the right of way. Public Works is evaluating the effectiveness of the green lanes, although initial feedback from bicyclists has been positive.



⤴ Green bike lanes were added through three intersections along 15th Avenue Southeast to improve safety.

⤵ The green bike lanes are intended to provide drivers with a visual indication that through bicyclists have the right-of-way.

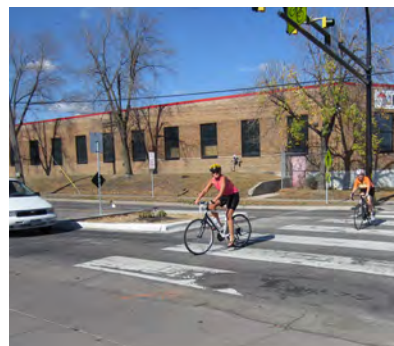
Safety Improvement:

Median Islands at a Midtown Greenway Trail Crossing

The Midtown Greenway is a popular trail for bicycling in south Minneapolis, carrying 3,000 bicycle trips per day past any given point. At East 28th Street where the greenway crosses the street, the safety of bicyclists was at risk. Four lanes of traffic posed a “double threat,” where one motorist stops to wave a bicyclist through, and another driver passes the stopped car and hits the crossing bicycle. To prevent these type of crashes from happening in the future, stakeholders rallied behind a plan to install median islands on the street, forcing drivers to queue into one lane in each direction.

The Midtown Greenway crossing at East 28th Street was challenging to cross due to the presence of a “double threat”

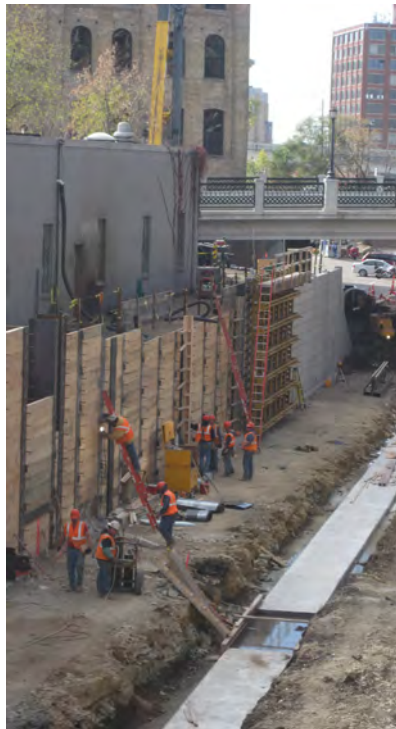
⤵ *from motor vehicle traffic.*



⤴ To eliminate the risk of a double threat, four travel lanes were reduced to two, and a large median island was installed.

new projects

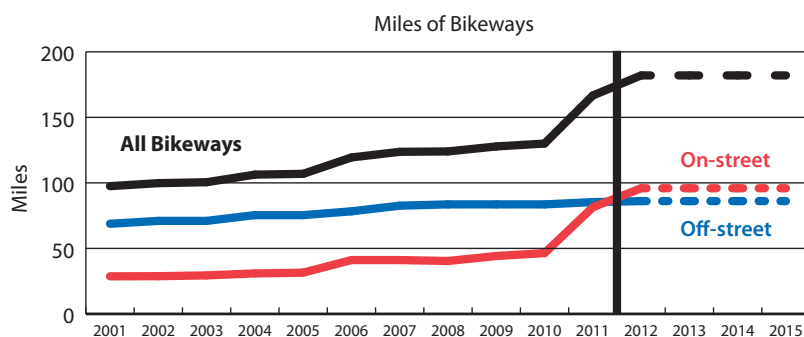
167 miles and counting



⌘ Construction crews work on a retaining wall along the final phase of the Cedar Lake Trail.

Right on Track

2011 saw Minneapolis come ever closer to its goal of having 178 miles of bikeways by 2015. At the start of the new year, the city had 130 miles of bikeways, and by the time construction season came to a close, that number had reached 167 miles. Eleven miles to go and counting!



Off-Street Bikeways

After nearly 20 years of planning, the final segment of the Cedar Lake Trail through downtown Minneapolis was completed. Carrying bicyclists between the Mississippi River and the Chain of Lakes area, the Cedar Lake Trail provides an off-street haven for downtown commuters and Minnesota Twins fans on two wheels (the trail actually goes under the new ballpark).

On the other side of downtown, the Hiawatha LRT Trail connection was completed next to the Metrodome, providing another vital link for downtown workers and visitors. Finally, northeast Minneapolis saw its first segment of an east-west greenway materialize, on 18th Avenue Northeast.

After 20 years of planning, » the final phase of the Cedar Lake Trail opens in June.





« The final phase of the Cedar Lake Trail was completed, providing a direct route from south Minneapolis into downtown. The trail was squeezed between active freight and commuter rail lines and downtown buildings. It even goes under Target Field. »



The Hiawatha LRT Trail connection now provides a direct link from south Minneapolis into downtown. »



« The first segment of the Northeast 18th Avenue Trail was completed in 2011, providing an east-west connection between northeast neighborhoods. »

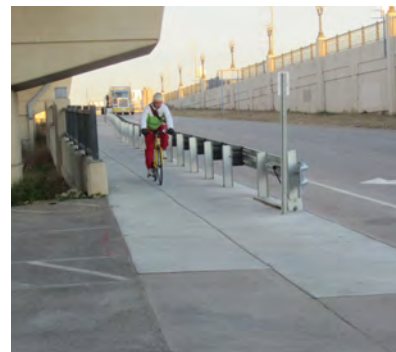
The Northeast 18th Avenue Trail established a safer crossing at Northeast University Avenue. »



A new neighborhood greenway was created along 37th Avenue North as part of a stormwater management program. »



A short but important connection was improved between the Hiawatha LRT Trail and Lake Street Station. »



new projects

On-Street Bikeways



⤴ A bicyclist rides on new bike lanes on First Avenue South.

35 Miles Added in 2011

2011 was a banner year for expansion of the on-street bikeway system. Thirty-five miles of streets were upgraded to bikeway status, bringing the miles of on-street bikeways from 45 to 80, an 80 percent increase. Most of these miles were added due to the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program (NTP), a federal source of funding designated to increase bicycling. Opportunities on City street maintenance projects and Hennepin County efforts rounded out the total. While the majority of projects came in the form of striped bike lanes, the new concept of “bike boulevards” (designated bike routes on quiet streets) took hold in 2011, with four corridors implemented.



⤵ Minneapolis saw its first buffered bike lanes on Fremont Avenue North and First Avenue South. The buffered area gives bicyclists more elbow room to increase comfort and safety.



⤵ Bike lanes were added on South Third Street between Norm McGrew Place and North First Avenue. The lane provides a key connection from the Hiawatha LRT Trail extension into downtown.



⤴ On West 15th Street, a European-style left turn option was installed. Here, the westbound bike lane turns into a slip ramp where bicyclists can wait to continue north on the Loring Bikeway without merging across several lanes of traffic.



⤵ The resurfacing of several downtown streets provided many opportunities to expand the network of bike lanes. New lanes were added to South Sixth Street, Fourth Avenue South and Fifth Avenue South.



« Four bicycle boulevard corridors opened in 2011: The RiverLake Greenway, Bryant Avenue South, Northeast Fifth Street, and Northeast 22nd Avenue.

Bicycle boulevards are marked with large bicycle symbols. »



« Traffic calming features along bicycle boulevards such as traffic circles and speed humps encourage motorists to slow down while providing fewer stops for bicyclists.



« Special cut through paths are provided for bicycle traffic including several areas exclusive to bicyclists. »



Along the Northeast Fifth Street » bicycle boulevard, bicycle signal detections are marked to help bicyclists cross busy streets like Central and Hennepin Avenues.



Innovative bicycling solutions

Innovation

Minneapolis has joined the vanguard of American cities using innovation on bicycle projects. Seven experiments approved by the Federal Highway Administration were implemented, including advisory bike lanes, green bike lanes, green shared lanes, enhanced shared lane markings, and Minneapolis' first bicycle traffic signal. A two year evaluation period will determine the successes and challenges of each treatment.



⌘ *The first bicycle traffic light in Minnesota was installed at Northeast Fifth Street and Northeast Broadway Street. The signal will allow bicyclists to safely cross Broadway, which sees 15,000 vehicles per day.*



⌘ *Minneapolis installed the first advisory bike lanes in North America in 2011.*

Enhanced shared lane markings on LaSalle Avenue advise drivers of the presence of bicyclists as they climb a steep hill.



⌘ *Intermittent green shared lanes were installed along Bryant Avenue South.*



⌘ *Several green bike lanes were installed at intersections and merge areas with a high potential for bicyclist-motorist conflicts.*

Making more durable facilities

long-term solutions

Long-term Maintenance

Given the current economic climate, investment in the long-term maintenance of the bikeway system is a priority. Increasing the safety and visibility of bicyclists is also a top priority. With both of these goals in mind, approximately 600 durable bicycle symbols were installed on new and existing on-street bikeways. The symbols are made of poly preform tape and are placed in recessed grooves in the pavement; helping mitigate the effects of plow blades in the winter. Funding for these symbols came from the City of Minneapolis capital program and federal transportation dollars.

600 durable bicycle symbols were installed on new and existing bikeways. They are expected to last five times as long as regular paint. »



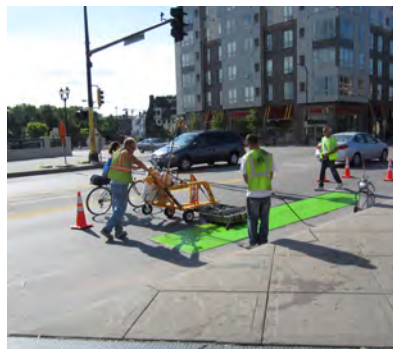
« Crews unroll a stretch of durable poly preform tape. More and more bike lanes are being installed with this material.



« A few extra steps during installation increases the durability of on-street markings. Here the pavement is ground down to create a recessed groove for poly preform tape. This helps mitigate the effects of plow blades in the winter. »



» Crews install green preformed thermoplastic on the 15th Avenue Southeast bike lanes. Used in many warm and mild weather cities, Minneapolis is testing the durability of the material in a winter climate.



Educating and encouraging



⌘ The Minneapolis bike walk ambassadors with Sen. Amy Klobuchar at the RiverLake Greenway grand opening.

Bike Walk Ambassador Program

The Ambassador Program was funded in 2007 through a Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program grant to the City of Minneapolis' Department of Public Works. Launched in July of 2008, the program is a federal pilot aiming to shift people from driving to biking and walking.

In 2011, the ambassadors hit the streets offering free bicycle tune ups at local farmers markets and a women's bike maintenance and safety series. They also coordinated community celebrations and grand opening for new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects, developed a bicycle awareness training for commercial vehicle drivers and created a guide for teachers and educators on conducting bicycle and pedestrian rodeos.

Ambassadors were present at large citywide events and many smaller neighborhood events answering questions, helping people find good routes and working hard to make the streets safer and more comfortable for all users.



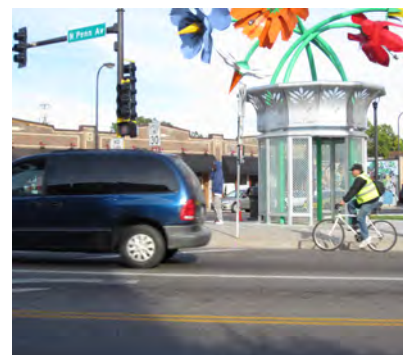
Participants in 2011's » International Walk + Bike to school day.

Communities Putting Prevention to Work

Through its Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support has made several improvements to make it easier and more appealing for residents to increase physical activity through bicycling. In 2011, the following grant projects were ongoing or completed:

- Opening the Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee in north Minneapolis.
- Installing bike and pedestrian wayfinding signs.
- Expansion of Nice Ride to north Minneapolis.
- Promoting of biking and walking through the Bike. Walk. Move. campaign.
- Implementing Safe Routes to School programs.

Health and Family Support received the grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Minnesota Department of Health. Funding was made possible by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009.



⌘ Communities Putting Prevention to Work funds supported projects aimed at increasing physical activity through bicycling.

Minneapolis Bike Centers

The Freewheel Midtown Bike Center opened in 2008 along Minneapolis' Midtown Greenway, a 5.7 mile, east-west, grade-separated bikeway. The Midtown Bike Center was the first facility of its kind in the city.

The long-awaited University of Minnesota Bike Center opened in September on the East Bank of the University of Minnesota campus. The University of Minnesota Bike Center is a partnership with the Hub Bike Co-op.

Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee, located at Glenwood and Morgan avenues North, is open for business. Venture North intends to bring encouragement and support to residents of north Minneapolis who wish to explore the benefits of bicycling and walking.

Looking ahead, the Seward Bike Walk Center has been funded and is scheduled to be completed in 2012. The Seward neighborhood has been actively working to improve the pedestrian and bicycling experience for its diverse resident population.



⌘ The Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee is the first bike shop of its kind on the North Side and is now one of three bike centers in Minneapolis.

Safe Routes to School

Minneapolis Public Schools has been working hard to get more of its students up and moving by promoting biking and walking to school. In 2010 the district expanded Bus Safety Week to Transportation Safety Week and added a pedestrian and bicycle lesson to the curriculum that reaches all students pre kindergarten through fifth grade.

Safe Routes to School staff convene a monthly interagency work group that includes stakeholders from MPS Transportation, Student Support Services, Emergency Management, Safety & Security, Community Education as well as City of Minneapolis Public Works, Health and Family Support, and Police departments. Safe Routes staff also works directly with schools to develop customized and comprehensive programming that often includes education, encouragement and enforcement efforts. Safe Routes programming is active in more than 15 schools and has plans to grow.

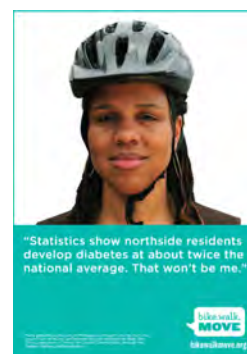


⌘ A Safe Routes to School walking school bus.

Bike. Walk. Move. Campaign

The Bike Walk Move campaign aims to inspire, educate and assist people in trying bicycling and walking as ways to get around their communities – whether it's to work, school, shopping, dining, worshipping or anywhere else for that matter! The idea is to get Twin Cities residents up and moving rather than sitting and driving or being driven around by someone else. The benefits are many.

Bike Walk Move uses social media, blog posts, lawn signs, press releases and even on-street chalking to advertise and promote new bicycle and pedestrian facilities funded through Bike Walk Twin Cities. Many of the projects completed in 2011 are located in Minneapolis.



⌘ The Bike. Walk. Move. campaign used a variety of methods to promote new bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

bike share

Nice Ride makes bike sharing easy



⌘ Council Member Elizabeth Glidden on a Nice Ride bike in downtown.

Nice Ride

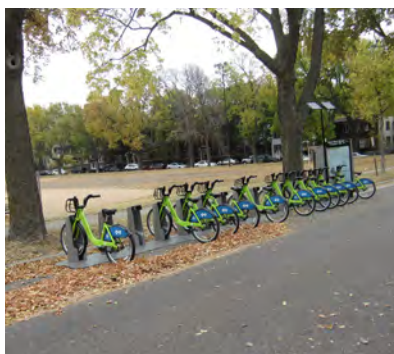
Nice Ride is the Twin Cities' world class bike share system. Sixty-five kiosks were put on the streets of Minneapolis during 2010 with a focus on Downtown and Uptown.

In 2011, the system expanded to 116 kiosks covering 34 square miles of Minneapolis and St. Paul. The expansion in 2011 brought eight stations to residents in north Minneapolis, and stations were also added in Northeast, South, and the U of M campus neighborhoods.

Additionally, 23 stations were added to Saint Paul along the Central Corridor, the campuses of U of M Saint Paul, Hamline, Concordia, St. Thomas and Macalester and extended east to Dale Street. In 2011, Nice Ride Minnesota tripled the number of one-year subscribers, doubled the number of trips and nearly doubled the number of stations and bikes.

Nice Ride had a successful year, as the number of subscriptions, trips, stations and bikes all increased substantially.

Nice Ride Figures	2010	2011	Change
One-year subscriptions	1,295	3,707	186%
Trips	100,800	217,530	115%
Stations	65	116	78%
Bikes	700	1,200	71%



⌘ In 2011, the Nice Ride system expanded further into the north and south sides and into western Saint Paul.



⌘ The Bike Walk Ambassadors show new users how to use the Nice Ride kiosks.

Helping you find your way

signs and maps

Bicycle Wayfinding

Helping bicyclists navigate the burgeoning bikeway system became a focus in 2011. Bicycle wayfinding signs were installed at several hundred locations. Minneapolis' North Side was an area of particular focus thanks to a federal grant from Communities Putting Prevention to Work. The city's most popular bicycle trails were also a focus.

Several hundred bicycle wayfinding signs were installed across the city in 2011. »



A number of street signs along bikeways were replaced with new bicycle street signs. Target areas include the North Side and along the Midtown Greenway. »



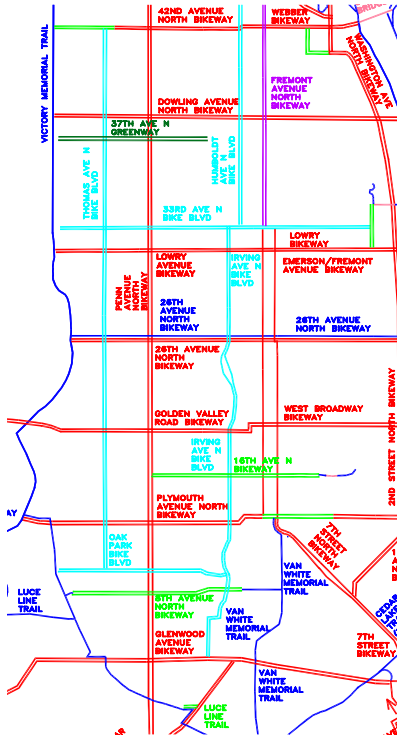
A New Bicycle Map

For decades, Minneapolis has gone without a bicycle map. In 2011, the Public Works Department began handing out 18,000 bicycle maps depicting our world class bikeway system. Filled with useful information about riding a bicycle in the city, this award winning map also includes safety tips and a listing of bicycle shops.

Minneapolis created its first official bicycle map in decades. Maps are free and can be picked up at any Minneapolis bicycle shop or public library. »



Establishing a framework for bicycling



⤴ In 2011, the City Council approved the Minneapolis Bicycle Plan which includes a list of prioritized projects among other initiatives and implementation strategies.

New Bike Plan Adopted

On July 22, 2011, the City Council approved the Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan. The plan is the bicycle element of the Access Minneapolis Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan.

The purpose of the Bicycle Master Plan is to establish goals, objectives and benchmarks that improve safety and mobility for bicyclists and increase the number of trips taken by bicycle. The plan discusses existing bicycle policies and conditions, analyzes bicycle needs, creates a prioritized list of projects and initiatives, and suggests possible funding sources to complete the plan. Following the approval of the plan, City Council unanimously approved the related Implementation Plan - recommendations developed by the City's Bicycle Advisory Committee for implementing the master plan.

The Bicycle Master Plan is considered a 30-year plan that offers goals in each of six “E” categories: education, encouragement, enforcement, engineering, equity and evaluation.

Pedicab Ordinance Changes

The City updated its business regulations for pedicabs in September 2011. The City Council lifted a rush hour ban on pedicabs downtown and added an electric-assist pedicab statute modification to the City's legislative agenda. This sets the stage to allow electric-assist pedicabs on city streets, pending changes to Minnesota state law.

New City Bicycle Parking & Access Guidelines

In December, the City developed a new set of draft guidelines for bicycle parking and access at City work sites. This document includes guidelines for the provision of a set number of short-term and long-term bicycle parking spaces depending on building type and usage for Minneapolis buildings.

The plan will be implemented by the Property Services Division of the City's Finance Department. The initial focus will be on the downtown core office space (e.g., City Hall, Public Service Center, City of Lakes and adjacent rental properties).

The purpose of the guidelines is to make City of Minneapolis work sites more accessible and friendly for employees who would like to bike (and for the public, as well). This harmonizes well with adopted sustainability goals for bicycle mode share and greenhouse gas emission reductions, as well as Minneapolis 2020 visions to become a more livable community and more eco-focused. The guidelines are designed to be a model policy that other Minneapolis and regional employers might consider adopting to help all work sites become more bicycle-friendly.

A New Definition for Traffic

Is it a vehicle? Is it a pedestrian? It's neither. It's a bicycle, and what's more, it's now part of traffic. Thanks to the Minneapolis City Council, bicycles are now explicitly included in the City ordinance definition of traffic. Including bicycles is one step in a lengthy process of integrating bicycles into the transportation system. This step will make it easier for City staff to interpret ordinances and rules that include the word "traffic"



« Minneapolis updated its business regulations for pedicabs in 2011.

Some of the faces behind bicycling

city staff profiles



Steve Mosing, Traffic Operations Engineer

Steve Mosing is the Minneapolis Traffic Operations Engineer, overseeing the City's system of stoplights, pavement markings and signs. He's also the behind-the-scenes decision maker on the city's bikeway system, giving stamps of approval for new and improved bike lanes. As Steve puts it, "Accommodations for travel modes that reduce congestion and emissions, and positively impact livability and health are prioritized high in the City. Therefore building and maintaining bicycling facilities is an integral part of the City's transportation network."



Department of Health & Family Support

The Health Department's goal is to promote healthy weight through active living and healthy eating especially in areas of the city with the greatest health disparities. To that end, with state and federal grant funds, the department has launched a number of projects aimed at transforming the environment around us to be more conducive toward healthy activities like biking and walking. The department's Director of Policy and Community Programs Patty Bowler says, "We credit our city, school and community partners with increasing physical activity levels through these active transportation initiatives."



Jack Yuzna, Cedar Lake Trail Phase III Project Engineer

Jack Yuzna is an engineer in Public Works and served as the project engineer for the final Phase of the Cedar Lake Trail. The trail extension continues north under Target Field, walking a fine line between the North Star Commuter Rail line, Burlington Northern tracks and difficult topography. Negotiations with adjacent property owners required Jack and the project team to limit the width of properties acquired for budgetary reasons and also to retain as much as possible for future private development. In total, Jack and the team negotiated with 11 property owners to acquire the property rights to 23 parcels. Jack says, "It was one of the most challenging projects I've worked on, but I'm glad to see it got done."



Midtown Greenway Maintenance Workers

Scott and Jeff have an important job in Minneapolis' cold and snowy winters. They are the snow plow drivers who keep the Midtown Greenway and the Hiawatha LRT Trail clear of snow so that hardy bike commuters can pedal year round. Because their experience goes back to the time the trails opened, they know each and every turn and split along the paths. Some bicyclists who use the trail know Scott and Jeff by sight and wave every time they see them. It's also not uncommon for them to get a thumbs-up sign from other people bicycling and with anywhere from 200 to 1,000 bicycle trips being made each day in the winter (depending upon the weather), this is a job that receives its fair share of gratitude.

fun and events

Celebrating cycling and safer streets



⌘ The Sabathanites Drum Corp plays at the RiverLake Greenway grand opening.

⌘ The ribbon cutting on the new Bryant Avenue South Bikeway.



Project Openings

2011 saw the completion of many new bicycle facilities throughout the City. Grand opening events were held to celebrate these new bikeways. The Bike Walk Ambassador Program partnered with Bike Walk Twin Cities' Bike. Walk. Move. campaign to organize grand opening event celebrations for the following projects:

- RiverLake Greenway
- Bryant Avenue Bikeway
- University of Minnesota Bike Center
- Downtown Minneapolis Bikeways
- Northeast Minneapolis Bikeways
- Emerson & Fremont Avenue Bikeway
- 1st/Blaisdell Avenue Bikeway

These newly completed projects were celebrated with community events that included group rides, guided technical tours, entertainment, refreshments, bicycle rodeos, and many other bicycle and family friendly activities. Each project celebration was made possible through partnerships with local community stakeholders.

⌘ Free helmets were passed out at the Emerson and Fremont Bikeway and Venture North Bike Walk Coffee grand opening.



Longfellow Share the Road

In September, the bike walk ambassadors teamed up with Longfellow Community Council to host a Share the Road education event. The ambassadors were on hand with Longfellow Community Council staff and volunteers to distribute information about how bicycles, pedestrians and cars can all do a better job of sharing the road. People stopped to talk about the rules of the road and have a snack and hot cider, while a volunteer in a chicken costume demonstrated correct road-crossing technique. The Public Works Department made two traffic speed trailers available for the event.



⌘ Members of the Longfellow Community Council participated in a Share the Road event in September.

Open Streets

On Sunday, June 12, 2011, Minneapolis residents had the opportunity to explore and enjoy neighborhood streets by biking, walking and skating without the presence of motorized traffic. The inaugural Open Streets event (based on Bogotá, Colombia's Ciclovía) brought together families and neighbors to mingle, recreate and shop in their communities in a safe, car-free environment.

The route extended for two miles along Lyndale Avenue South, stitching together six neighborhoods and three city wards. Various complementary programming could be found up and down the street including yoga, dancing, music and games. Estimates indicate that more than 5,000 people attended the four-hour event.

Open Streets was hosted and organized by the Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition and received funding and support from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, Bikes Belong, Bike Walk Week and various local businesses along the route.



⌘ More than 5,000 people experienced a car-free street during the Open Streets event in June.

Twin Cities Bike Walk Week

Spring Bike Walk Week was held June 4 to 12. This event focuses on getting people to try biking and walking as a part of their transportation. The main event is Bike Walk to Work day, but various events and promotions encourage people to replace one trip - any trip during the week - with biking or walking.

Many new and exciting events were added this year, making the week a huge success. Events included Minneapolis's First Open Streets celebration, Women's Wednesday and Yoga on the Greenway. Participation was up 30 percent this year, with 9,603 registrants. Fall Bike Walk Week encourages people to extend their season and focuses on schools. The week leverages the momentum of International Bike + Walk to School Day. This year 44 schools reported more than 7,600 students, parents and staff participated.

Safe Routes Conference

The third Safe Routes to School National Conference was held in Minneapolis August 16 to 18, 2011. The purpose of the conference is for those working in schools or on any type of Safe Routes projects to come together to share ideas, resources, projects and best practices. There were 604 registrants of which, 205 were from Minnesota. The conference offered mobile workshops and paid for the use of pedicabs in downtown Minneapolis on one of the evenings. Keynote speakers included: R.T. Rybak, mayor of Minneapolis; Jim Oberstar, former chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee; Victor Mendez, administrator, Federal Highway Administration; and Paul Osborne, director of Sustrans' Schools and Children's Programme.

Here are some comments about Minneapolis from conference attendees:

- "It seems that cities that are innovative in other transportation issues are more open for Safe Routes to Schools initiatives."
- "Minneapolis exceeded my expectations. Their ped-bike infrastructure is superb."
- "Minneapolis was beautiful, the weather was perfect, and it was great to see so many people (not just us) walking and biking, and motorists watching out for and yielding to pedestrians and bicyclists!"
- "Nice Ride bikes were available for both recreational tours and mobile workshops."

other initiatives

Additional updates on the bicycling front



⤴ In 2011, Minneapolis was recognized as a gold-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists.

League of American Bicyclists Awards

It was a big year for bicycling in Minneapolis, and our accomplishments have not gone unnoticed.

Going for Gold

Three years after receiving the League of American Bicyclists' recognition as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the silver level, Minneapolis reapplied for a higher recognition and won the gold. Bill Nesper, director of the league's Bicycle Friendly America Program, said, "The city's great investments in bike lanes, bicycling safety education, and encouragement programs have paid off for its residents. In fact, communities across the country are now looking at Minneapolis as a model."

Bike Friendly University

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is currently the only recognized Bicycle Friendly University in Minnesota. The University of Minnesota Twin Cities was awarded a Silver designation in 2010, the first round of awards for the new program.

Attaining a Bicycle Friendly University designation can be a goal for any higher education institution interested in encouraging more of its students, staff and faculty to use non-motorized transportation. Working toward this goal raises the university's standards and increases efforts that lead to a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly campus environment.

New Bicycle Friendly Businesses

Several Minneapolis employers earned recognition as Bicycle Friendly Businesses from the League of American Bicyclists in 2011. The program seeks to encourage businesses, work sites, universities, communities and states to become better places for bicyclists via measurable objectives in areas including engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation. Three new local businesses were added this year for a total of 13 businesses. The City of Minneapolis was upgraded to a gold level workplace in 2011.

Members of the Bicycle Advisory Committee met with First Precinct staff to discuss bicycle-related enforcement issues in 2011.



Bicycle Advisory Committee Reorganization

The City's Bicycle Advisory Committee was successfully reorganized in early 2011. In February, the City Council directly appointed a group of residents to the committee. Whereas previous membership consisted of any individuals able to attend, the new committee includes appointees from each ward; three at-large parks board appointees; and voting members representing the City Council, City departments and partner organizations such as Minneapolis Public Schools, Metro Transit and MnDOT.

There was tremendous interest in this particular advisory committee. More than 90 people applied for the 16 resident spots available. This clearly indicates how excited the public is to make Minneapolis as bicycle-friendly as it can be.



Bike and Pedestrian Coordinator

In late 2011, Minneapolis hired Shaun Murphy as its Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. Shaun will lead and manage our pedestrian and bicycling programs through effective coordination among numerous internal and external stakeholders, agencies and partners plus effective engagement of our citizens, workers and visitors. Through creative and innovative approaches and ideas, Shaun will seek and ensure implementation of system improvements. As a current city employee Shaun will hit the ground running to move Minneapolis to the next levels in walking and bicycling.

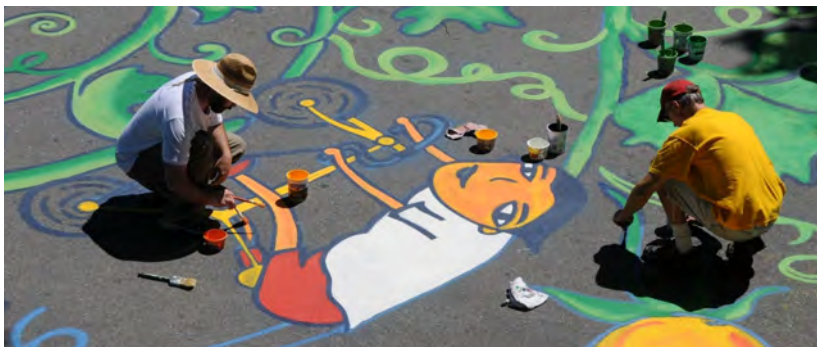


Parking and Public Air Kits

Over 1,000 bicycle parking spaces were added throughout the city as part of the Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program Bicycle Parking Project and the City's 50/50 Cost Share Program. Many of these locations were at parks and schools.

Air kits - manual bike pumps permanently affixed to outdoor sign posts and bike racks - were installed at several public buildings including City Hall, the Public Service Center, the Minneapolis Farmers Market, and others.

More than 100 volunteers from the Corcoran Neighborhood made the intersection of 19th Avenue South and East 34th Street more colorful in 2011.



Hennepin Green Lane Study

In 2011 Public Works conducted a study to evaluate the effectiveness of the Hennepin Avenue green shared lanes. Results show that most cyclists are riding in the green lanes and that crash rates decreased since installation. However, public survey results show that many bicyclists still feel unsafe on Hennepin Ave.

Paint the Pavement

The intersection of 19th Avenue South and East 34th Street in south Minneapolis got a lot more colorful in 2011. In August, more than 100 volunteers from the Corcoran Neighborhood joined artist Elise Kylo in painting the designs - several of which include bicyclists. Eric Gustafson of the Corcoran Neighborhood Organization says that while the concept originated from traffic calming concerns, the project proved to be a "really powerful community-building exercise." The neighborhood worked with the Public Works and Community Planning and Economic Development departments to get permission to paint in the public right-of-way. Funding for the design and installation came from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Commission.

